



Our Children. Our Schools. Our future.

SEPTEMBER 2013

EXECUTIVE ORDER

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Dear Friends and Supporters,

Over the last few years, Arizona's education system has been focused on raising our academic expectations for students and teachers. This is critical to ensure our students are prepared when they graduate from high school, whether they choose a job or further education. This focus is supported by business leaders, state and local government leaders, and various other organizations across the state — in addition to the wide support from the teaching community.

Earlier this month, Governor Brewer issued an Executive Order reaffirming 1) our state's control over education policies, 2) the power of local entities to make decisions about curriculum and instructional materials, and 3) the need to ensure that Arizona's students are College and Career Ready.

Arizona has not been forced into any program or policy by the federal government. Our standards were adopted through a lengthy public vetting process at the State Board of Education in June 2010. As a publicly funded system, Arizona's taxpayers deserve a solid set of standards and expectations as the "goal line" for what students achieve.

Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards promote critical-thinking, logical progressions, real-world relevance and strong communications skills for the 21st Century. The standards refocus the education system around clear and concise expectations. They allow teachers time to have deeper and more meaningful lessons, and they encourage students to be active participants in their learning.

While the Arizona State Board of Education has set the goal, teachers have been diligently "writing the playbook" for their students, and should be commended for their efforts. They should also know that we are all standing by our decisions and that the broad community supports what they're doing. The Executive Order ensured all of us that the ongoing work in the field is critical and necessary.

As other states navigate through their own education reforms, we have an opportunity to propel Arizona beyond our usual bottom-of-the-pack rankings and become a leader in what is possible — but only with commitment and hard work from all of us.

We are always encouraged by the dedication of the education field and excited by the collaborations throughout the community. We know that elevating the standards, increasing accountability and supporting teachers will yield great improvements for all of Arizona's students.

Sincerely,
The Arizona Ready Team